

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 4300

S E C R E T LUSAKA 2794

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E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR, ZA, RH

SUBJ: KAUNDA'S REPLY TO SECRETARY'S MESSAGE ON SEPT 26 FRONTLINE
COMMUNIQUE

REF: LUSAKA 2793

DEAR MR. SECRETARY OF STATE;

WHEN I MET ASSISTANT SECRETARY SCHAUFLE IN GABERONE RECENTLY,
I PROMISED TO SEND A REPLY TO YOUR LETTER OF SEPTEMBER 27, 1976.

IN ALL FRANKNESS, I MUST TELL YOU THAT THE LETTER MUST HAVE
BEEN SENT TO A WRONG ADDRESS. IT LEFT ME WITH A VERY PAINFUL
IMPRESSION THAT THE FIVE POINTS YOU REFERRED TO IN YOUR
THIRD PARAGRAPH WERE DISCUSSED WITH ME BEFORE YOUR MEETING
WITH VORSTER AND SMITH. THIS IS THE IMPRESSION WHICH HAS BEEN
GIVEN TO THE WORLD AND THIS IS WHAT WE SAY IS NOT CORRECT.
OUR DISCUSSIONS BEFORE PRETORIA WERE ON THE BASIS OF YOUR
MESSAGE OF 31ST AUGUST, 1976 TO WHICH I GAVE YOU MY REPLY IN
MY LETTER OF SEPTEMBER 3, 1976. IT IS, THEREFORE, IMPORTANT
TO SET THE RECORD CORRECT.

IT IS TRUE THAT ON YOUR RETURN FROM PRETORIA YOU PRESENTED
US WITH YOUR POINTS OF AGREEMENT WITH SMITH AND IN PRINCIPLE
WE WERE HAPPY THAT SMITH HAD ACCEPTED MAJORITY RULE. WE EXPRESSED
OUR APPRECIATION FOR YOUR WORK. BUT IT IS ALSO TRUE THAT WE
DISCUSSED OUR RESERVATIONS:

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FIRST, ON THE CONSTITUTIONAL ASPECTS OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AGREEMENT.

SECOND, ON THE COUNCIL OF STATE AND ESPECIALLY ON THE ISSUE OF CHAIRMANSHIP. WE MADE THE POINT THAT IT WAS ESSENTIAL TO HAVE A BRITISH CHAIRMAN.

THIRD, WE POINTED OUT THE DANGERS OF KEEPING THE MINISTRIES OF DEFENCE AND LAW AND ORDER IN WHITE HANDS.

YOU WILL ALSO RECALL THAT AT THE PRESS CONFERENCE HELD AFTER OUR TALKS, I REFUSED TO COMMENT ON THE SUBSTANCE OF OUR DISCUSSIONS. I MADE IT CLEAR THAT I WANTED TO CONSULT OTHER PRESIDENTS OF THE FRONTLINE STATES. THIS IS EXACTLY WHAT WE HAVE DONE.

IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT WE SEPARATE ISSUES IN DEALING WITH THIS PROBLEM. FIRST YOUR ROLE WHICH YOU HAVE EXECUTED WITH COMMENDABLE VIGOUR. WE CERTAINLY PAY TRIBUTE TO YOU FOR YOUR CONTRIBUTION. SECOND, IT WOULD BE WRONG FOR US TO ACCEPT THE IMPRESSION WHICH HAS GAINED CURRENCY THAT THERE WAS AGREEMENT BETWEEN US AND YOURSELF REGARDING WHAT HAS BEEN TERMED THE "PACKAGE DEAL". SMITH INSISTS THAT THESE POINTS WERE AGREED WITH THE PRESIDENTS. THE FACT IS THAT WE DID NOT AGREE WITH THE DETAILED POINTS. WE COULD NOT AS THESE WERE FOR THE NATIONALISTS TO NEGOTIATE AT THE CONFERENCE TABLE.

THERE WERE FURTHER ELEMENTS IN THE BASIC FRAMEWORK FOR A RHODESIAN SETTLEMENT WHICH WE DISCUSSED. THERE WAS THE PROPOSAL, FOR INSTANCE, OF THE WITHDRAWAL OF THE SMITH REGIME IN FAVOUR OF A CARE-TAKER GOVERNMENT WHICH WOULD, WITHOUT SMITH, CONDUCT NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE NATIONALISTS TO ESTABLISH THE TRANSITIONAL GOVERNMENT. AFTER YOUR RETURN FROM PRETORIA WE DID NOT ACCUSE YOU OF HAVING MISLED US, NOR HAVE WE SPOKEN ABOUT THIS IN PUBLIC. WE WOULD LIKE TO BELIEVE THAT ALL THIS IS A DEMONSTRATION OF OUR COMMITMENT TO MAINTAIN THE MOMENTUM ON THE ROAD TO SECURING PERMANENT AND DURABLE PEACE WHICH WE ALL DESIRE.

FINALLY, AS YOU KNOW, I HAVE MADE NO PUBLIC STATEMENT ON THE
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POINTS OF AGREEMENT BETWEEN YOU AND SMITH. THE FIRST AND LAST REACTION WAS A JOINT STATEMENT BY THE FIVE PRESIDENTS ON SEPTEMBER 26, 1976. THE ESSENCE OF THAT STATEMENT WAS THE ACCEPTANCE BY THE FIVE PRESIDENTS OF THE BASIC PRINCIPLES OF YOUR PROPOSALS BUT COULD NOT ACCEPT THE DETAILS REGARDING THE STRUCTURE AND FUNCTIONS OF THE TRANSITIONAL GOVERNMENT AS THESE WERE THE PREROGATIVE OF THE NATIONALISTS WHO HAD THE RIGHT TO BE CONSULTED. AS YOU KNOW SMITH PUT HIS OWN UNACCEPTABLE INTERPRETATION TO

THESE DETAILS.

REGARDING REFERENCE TO THE MAJOR UNITED STATES INITIATIVE, I EXPLAINED OUR APPROACH TO YOUR AMBASSADOR. WE DID NOT CONSIDER IT ADVISABLE AT THIS STAGE. I AM PERSONALLY HONEST ENOUGH TO HAIL YOUR GREAT PERSONAL CONTRIBUTION AND THAT OF THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT IN GENERAL. HOWEVER, MY JUDGEMENT LEADS ME TO BELIEVE THAT IT IS NOT IN YOUR NATIONAL INTERESTS THAT WE BEGIN POURING PRAISES ON YOU AT THIS STAGE BECAUSE IT CAN BE COUNTER-PRODUCTIVE. THE HISTORY OF YOUR CONTRIBUTION IS RECORDED AND THAT IN MY VIEW IS FAR MORE IMPORTANT THAN WHAT MAY APPEAR IN PUBLIC. IF WE HAD TAKEN THE LINE OF MAKING REFERENCE TO THE UNITED STATES INITIATIVE AT THIS STAGE, WE CERTAINLY WOULD IMMEDIATELY BE MISUNDERSTOOD. THE INITIATIVE WOULD COLLAPSE.

I ALSO WANT TO MAKE A BRIEF REFERENCE TO YOUR MESSAGE OF OCTOBER 3, 1976 GIVEN TO ME BY YOUR AMBASSADOR. IN THE LAST PARAGRAPH OF THAT MESSAGE, YOU REFER TO REPORTS YOU RECEIVED THAT YOU GAVE JOSHUA NKOMO PROPOSALS FOR THE RHODESIAN SETTLEMENT WHICH DIFFER FROM THE ONES GIVEN TO SMITH. I WANT TO ASSURE YOU THAT WHEN I GIVE MY WORD OF HONOUR, I DO NOT BREAK IT.

I AM GRATEFUL FOR YOUR FRANKNESS AND IT IS IN THIS SPIRIT THAT I SEND YOU THIS MESSAGE IN TURN. MY DUTY IS TO CONSTRUCT AND NOT TO DESTROY.

YOURS SINCERELY,
KENNETH KAUNDA
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA

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